



Service Employees International Union Local 503

72,000 public services workers, care providers, and non-profit employees in Oregon.

To: Senate Committee on Rules
On: February 22nd, 2022
Re: House Bill 4133

Chair Wagner, Vice-Chair Knopp, and Members of the Committee,

My name is David Ramos, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of SEIU Locals 503 and 49 – who represent more than 85,000 workers in the state of Oregon from public sector employees to care providers, janitors, healthcare workers, nonprofit workers, and more -- in support of HB 4133: Oregon Voter Registration Plus (OVR+).

Oregon's current online voter registration (OVR) system is limited to people who have either an Oregon driver's license or a non-driver ID card issued by the Oregon DMV. HB 4133 will help modernize our OVR system to allow registrants to upload an image of their signature and register online using the last four digits of their social security number.

This change would lead to increased efficiency of our state's elections. By implementing this program, we would be expanding access to the roughly 10% of the electorate who do not have a DMV-issued form of identification; and as a result, do not have access to online voter registration and must rely on costly paper registration forms. By allowing these Oregonians to register to vote online, we are looking at potential savings that are significant.

From a security standpoint, we understand that implementing OVR+ would reduce the potential for human error that is present with paper forms. Currently, election workers are tasked with manually entering information from the paper registration forms into a database – increasing the likelihood that data-entry errors will occur. By increasing access to an automated online system, data can be transferred directly from the voter to the database. Aside from streamlining voter registration, this will allow our state's election workers to spend more time administering efficient and secure elections, and less time bogged down by administrative tasks with a simple remedy.

One of the most significant reasons why we strongly support this bill that cannot be understated is the equity impact it will have on our state. Historically marginalized communities are more likely to benefit from this improved access and are some of the most critical voices that need be heard during elections to ensure that our government is representative of and serving the needs of Oregon's increasingly diverse population.

Oregon has always been a national leader with respect to election modernization. Let's live up to our reputation, modernize our online voter registration system, and pave the way for an increasingly equitable and representative Democracy.

Sincerely,

David Ramos
Policy & Political Strategist
SEIU Local 503, OPEU